



# VIETNAM' S IMPERIAL GOLD

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Some of this is crude, it is the way  
it was.

**AIR AMERICA - THE CIA'S PRIVATELY OWNED  
AIRLINE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA** - A private company  
set up during the Vietnam war to provide air  
transport logistics for the CIA and State  
Department through-out Southeast Asia. Air  
America's civilian pilots flew bush planes and  
helicopters into some of the most demanding  
ultra- short, mountain top and jungle landing  
strips and zones in Laos and South Vietnam. All  
while under communist fire. They faced the same  
combat hazards as the military, but without  
military protections. Air America had 217  
aviators killed in Laos alone during the war.

Air America pilots have been accused of  
participating in the smuggling of drugs out of  
Laos. I have personally known several of their  
former pilots, high caliber men and aviators.

I have researched the issue. They were honorable warriors. Despite Hollywood, I find very little evidence, Air America pilots knowingly moved drugs for anyone. The CIA was running the show, and with the "spooks", one never knew, what their cargo containers might hold.

The drugs moved out of Laos on aircraft operated by our ally's leaders, and the French-Corsican Mafia. But Air America did occasionally when called for do a little off the books bombing, mainly using borrowed T-28 aircraft.

**ANGKOR WAT AND SIEM REAP CAMBODIA - ANGKOR WAT IS A 600 YEAR OLD IMPERIAL TEMPLE RUIN COMPLEX IN NORTH CENTRAL CAMBODIA -** It is one of the ancient wonders of the world. It is adjacent to the small city of Siem Reap and the great Tonle Sap lake. Because of American Rules of Engagement concerning no attacks around cultural sites, the Khmer Rouge used Angkor Wat as a base safe from American air attacks. For peace time tourist purposes, there was a large paved runway adjacent to the ruins.

**ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F KENNEDY -**

A tipping point event for American culture and the Vietnam War. I have a fictional version of JFK's assassination in this work. I don't know who shot John Kennedy, I am certain however, he was murdered on the streets of Dallas.

None of the local Texas protocols and legal procedures for a murder investigation

were followed. Kennedy's body and the crime scene of his limo were essentially taken by threat of force by the Secret Service and removed from Texas, and put in the hands of Washington insiders. The whole show was then essentially run by those two paragons of government integrity, the new President Lyndon Baines Johnson, and Herbert Hoover of the FBI. ( One of the first questions a crime investigator asks, who benefits?).

After the murder of Kennedy and President Diem of South Vietnam just two weeks earlier. The Vietnam War exploded from a small civil war into a full blown conventional and insurgency war involving over a million and a half combatants. And American culture begin a major change continuing today.

#### **AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND - CRITICAL AMERICAN ALLIES DURING THE VIETNAM WAR -**

**Australia** along with a smaller contingent of **New Zealand** troops fought alongside of America in Vietnam. Fresh from helping the British win a successful counter insurgency in Malaysia, the Australians knew how to fight an Asian guerilla war, and were possibly the most effective allied unit in the entire war. Of course, the hubristic American leaders both political and military never listened to the experienced Aussies. Who had just won an Asian guerilla war. We know how that turned out. ( The British offered the advice of the leader of their successful counter

insurgency in Malaysia. American leadership choose not to listen to him either.)

**COMMUNIST ANTI-AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS DURING THE VIETNAM WAR** - During the Vietnam war the communists of North Vietnam could never begin to match American air power. But with Russian help, they put their available resources into building the most sophisticated anti-aircraft system available. It was partially operated by Russians and the Chinese.

Under very restrictive rules imposed from Washington, American pilots flew into this system on a daily basis. We lost almost 3,000 fixed wing aircraft, and around 5,000 helicopters to fierce enemy fire. Some of the Russian weapons we faced were the Surface to Air missiles; SAM-2, SAM-3, SAM-6 and the shoulder fired SA-7; Of the Anti-Aircraft radar directed guns there were the ZPU-4 with four 23MM cannons, the ZSU-23 two and four auto cannon versions, the single barrel 37MM gun, ZSU-57MM with two cannons, and the high altitude capable 85MM gun. These weapons made up the most lethal anti-aircraft system ever used up to that time.

The basic communist tactic was to fire the missiles and force the American aircraft to a lower altitude in range of the guns. In North Vietnam proper, they would use their Russian radar system and MIG aircraft to ambush American aircraft with supersonic hit and run air to air missile attacks from the rear. (for much of the war American Rules of Engagement from Washington prohibited American pilots from attacking these radar sites).

**ARVN - THE ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM** - In general all of the armed forces of South Vietnam, America's ally.

**BANK - THE STATE BANK OF SOUTH VIETNAM** - The treasury of the South Vietnamese government which kept the gold reserves of the South Vietnamese government. It was in an imposing building in downtown Saigon near the rail station, and the river.

**BEN HET SPECIAL FORCES - BORDER RANGER CAMP, IN SOUTH VIETNAM'S CENTRAL HIGHLANDS** - 6 miles from the point where the Cambodian, Laotian, and South Vietnamese borders came together in the isolated highlands. It was within a few miles of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and two major North Vietnamese Army protected staging areas. Ben Het was the last surviving South Vietnamese border outpost in the dangerous and strategic Central Highlands. At various times it was manned by U.S. Army Special Forces, Rangers, regular Army units, and South Vietnamese Montagnard hill tribesmen mercenaries. Despite its hill top isolation along the Laotian and Cambodian borders, Ben Het had resisted being overrun for five years. It was the site of one of the few, tank battles during the Vietnam War. The scarred, bullet riddled sign over its front gate read by new arriving troops said, **"WELCOME PILGRIM AND CONGRATULATIONS! If, you are reading this? YOU TOO, HAVE BEEN HAD AT BEN HET"**.



**B-52 STRATOFORTRESS BOMBER AIRCRAFT** - Also known by the **GI SLANG TERM** as the "**BUFF - A BIG UGLY FLYING FUCKER**" - American Strategic bomber capable of delivering a 25 ton bomb load in total silence from thirty thousand feet at five hundred miles an hour. These silent high altitude bombing raids were called **ARC LIGHTS**. These bombing attacks from on high by B-52s were epic. The **BOMBER-52** was probably the most feared American weapon of the entire war. The communists referred to them as "**IRON CROWS OF DEATH**". The B-52 was the deciding factor in at least four of the major battles in Vietnam, Khe Sanh, An Loc, Kontum, and the 1972 Christmas bombing of Hanoi. The B-52 saved many isolated American units from being over-run. If the French had them, they probably could have survived Dien Bien Phu.

**BINGO FUEL** - When a military aircraft reaches a minimum fuel level, and must return to a safe landing field.

**THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS PROHIBITION CONVENTION - SIGNED ON APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>, 1972 BY PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON** - The first multinational arms control treaty banning an entire class of strategic weapons. It prohibited the production, development or stockpiling of any chemical, biological or toxin weapons. Nixon had doubts about whether the U.S. government agencies involved, had been honest with him,

their Commander in Chief, concerning compliance with the treaty's provisions.

**THE "BLACK WORLD"** - As with any imperial state, America has acquired the largest intelligence, espionage, and secret police organizations on earth. Today there are 17 of these American government secret organizations acknowledged. Most of their operations are hidden from public scrutiny, hence the term the **"Black World"**. Duplicity is the common currency, deception rules, and nothing is ever as it seems, very little daylight shines on them. In the long run, this is not healthy for a constitutional republic.

**BOKOR HILL STATION, CAMBODIA** - A high mountain French colonial resort in Cambodia. In the days before air conditioning, it was a place the French colonials in Cambodia could go to escape the suffocating tropical heat and diseases of the Asian lowlands.

**BODY COUNTS - THE METRIC OF DEATH** - Chosen by LBJ, McNamara, and General Westmoreland as the major measure of whether, we were winning the Vietnam war. It led to wildly overcounted enemy deaths, as American officers wanting promotion, routinely overestimated how many communists they had killed. Essentially the American leadership's best strategy idea, was on the Asian mainland to try and kill more Asians than could be tolerated. There are a lot of Asians.



**BOOM BOOM - BOOM BOOM ROOM - GI SLANG TERMS - FOR HAVING SEX WITH A NATIVE PROSTITUTE - AND A PLACE WHERE ONE COULD HAVE SEX WITH A PROSTITUTE** - Yes mom and pop, young Johnny America had sex when he could find it. Intensely and often, if he could manage it. After all, he might not get another chance to, if he is KIA. In those days, the act was still done by and large between men and women, and sometimes a baby was born.

**"THE BUGS, THE BAD BUGS" - GI SLANG TERM** - Troops working with bacteriological special weapons would sometimes refer to them using these terms.

**THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SOUTH VIETNAM** - The Catholic church starting in the 1700s sent priests to Vietnam. Under the French it expanded its presence, and was a major cultural force there by the time South Vietnam came into being. The first President of South Vietnam, Diem was a Roman Catholic. One of his brothers was a Bishop in Hue. There was a tension between the minority Catholics and the Buddhist majority. Many of the refugees who fled North Vietnam into South Vietnam were Catholic.

**CH-46 SEA KNIGHT HELICOPTER, ALSO CALLED THE "PHROG" - A GI SLANG TERM** - The main U.S. Marine troop transport helicopter used in Vietnam. A new aircraft carrier capable twin engine and rotor design helicopter introduced in

1967. It was quickly pushed to the limits in Vietnam combat, had teething problems, and was considered a very dangerous flying machine at the time. It carried up to 24 Marine infantry men. It went on to 45 years of dependable service for the Marines and Navy.

**"CHECK YOUR SIX" - A GI SLANG TERM** - Term meaning to be on guard, always check to your rear. Such as in an aerial dog fight. The "six" o'clock position is directly to your rear.

**CHOLON** - The Chinatown section on the southside of Saigon. It was basically a slum built over a swamp. All manner of illegal items could be had there, anything from opium, underage prostitutes, or stolen American supplies and weapons.

**LE CLUB CERCLE SPORTIF SAGIONISE** - The private former French colonial social and sporting club located just behind the Presidential Palace in central Saigon. After the French left Vietnam, it was taken over by the South Vietnamese elites with the addition of American and remaining French members. It was the epicenter of social, political, and economic power for South Vietnam. It consisted of the main club house, eight clay tennis courts, and a swimming pool area surrounded by roman type columns.

On the fringes of Saigon people were dying as flares lighted the night time, and artillery rounds were landing, just a few miles from the Club Cercle Sportif. Mean-while, in the club

both the South Vietnamese elites and American elites were making deals, and Louis the 14<sup>th</sup> themed costume parties were happening, conga lines were swaying, and champagne was flowing. All with just a touch of Roman decadence combined with a slight Asian flavor.

**"A CLUSTER FUCK" - GI SLANG TERM** - An event which has been badly planned and executed, and will come to a bad ending.

**"THE COMMANDANT" - THE FOUR STAR GENERAL IN COMMAND OF THE U.S. MARINES** - Reverently and often referred to by all Marines, for all sorts of reasons. Much more so, than members of other services refer to their four star commanding generals.

**COMMUNIST "RED CHINA"** - One of the two main communist powers during the cold war era. Since the communists took power in China in 1947, the U.S. had no official diplomatic contact with them. Until, President Nixon in a surprise move went to Peking, and met with the communist leader Chairman Mao in February 1972. This had the effect of beginning to drive a wedge between the Chinese and the Soviet Union. It also disturbed North Vietnam's confidence in their Communist Chinese allies. Many of America's bad decisions related to the Vietnam war were made, due to calculating what the Communist Chinese might or might not do. Nixon's historic 1972 visit to China, is said to be the opening gambit in America's winning the Cold War some 17 years later.

One of the main reasons the North Vietnamese did not run out of combat troops during the war in South Vietnam. China sent 300,000 troops to do the anti-aircraft systems work, logistics, and guard duty in North Vietnam proper.

**C-130 HERCULES AIRCRAFT - "THE HERK"** - The indispensable pack horse of the American imperial impulse. A four engine turbo prop with 16,000 horsepower. It is a ruggedly built, STOL short take-off and landing machine. It is capable of landing heavy cargo on unimproved, and short dirt landing strips at the edge of the battle fields. It can carry 88 para-troopers into combat. There are gunship, air to air refueling, electronic warfare, command and control, and long range ocean patrol and rescue versions also. A powerful, rugged beast of a machine, it is an icon of American power.

**COLD WAR - FROM 1947 UNTIL 1991** - It lasted over 40 years, and American victory was signified by the tearing down of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The Vietnam War was a proxy war subset of the greater Cold War. Many of America's missteps and bad decision making in the Vietnam war, were the result of considerations of the greater and longer cold war struggle with the communist Soviet Union. It was much like the struggle between Republican Rome and Carthage for control of the Mediterranean basin 2,200 years ago.

**CORSICAN MAFIA - THE INDOCHINA BRANCH OF THE MAJOR FRENCH ORGANIZED CRIME FAMILY -**

During the French colonial rule, the Corsicans were heavily involved in various forms of criminal activity through-out Southeast Asia. But most importantly, in the opium and heroin trade. They also operated some remarkable "Houses of Ill Repute". All this was done with the help of the French colonial government and French intelligence organizations. With whom they shared the profits from these criminal activities. By the early 1970s the Corsicans were being pushed out by native Asian criminal organizations. The Corsicans were noted for their brutality.

**U.S. ARMY GENERAL CREIGHTON ABRAMS -** The replacement for General Westmoreland. Abrams was as good a field commander as General Westmoreland was a bad one. In mid 1968 when Abrams took command, at once he began the process of moving away from "search and destroy tactics" ,and toward a more counter insurgency dominant strategy. By 1972 Abram's leadership had brought the Viet Cong insurgency to its knees. The Viet Cong was being kept on life support by North Vietnam. But unfortunately, the American people's stomach for more war was also exhausted. By 1968 LBJ, McNamara, and Westmoreland had fettered away five years of public support for the war. After 1972 and ten years of war, the American political will to keep the North Vietnamese army from conventionally attacking South Vietnam no longer existed. By late 1974 with Nixon now deposed,

the U.S. Congress cut off South Vietnamese supplies. And in 1975 the North Vietnamese army attacked conventionally and won the war.

**DALAT CITE' , SOUTH VIETNAM** - One hundred and fifty miles north of Saigon, it was the cool high altitude refuge and mountain resort for Vietnam's French colonials. Low land tropical disease and heat killed the average French colonialist in five years-time. In Dalat during the war, the South Vietnamese army and the Viet Cong had an informal truce. They both used Dalat as a rest area from the war. Dalat was kept off limits to most American military personnel. It was also the location of a nuclear research reactor the U.S. gave South Vietnam in 1963. Cam Ly airfield was just outside the town limits.

**DAVIS STATION, SAIGON AND RAMASUN STATION, UDORN, THAILAND** - National Security Agency electronic listening posts ( electronic spying ) manned mainly by U.S. Army personnel. Davis Station was at Tan Son Nuht airport on the edge of Saigon. Ramasun Station was few miles south of Udorn, Thailand.

**TERMS OF DEATH - "BUY THE FARM, AUGER IN, MAKE A SMOKING HOLE, TITS UP, WACKED, SMOKED, KIA'D, ZAPPED, GREASED, GOT HIT, POPPED, WASTED, BLOWN AWAY"** - Terms aviators and military men used signify the death of one of their comrades or the enemy.



**D-18 AND VOLPAR BEEHCRAFT AIRCRAFT** - A ten passenger, with twin radial reciprocating engines, the primary light logistics aircraft used by Air America to transport CIA, and State Department, personnel through-out Southeast Asia. The faster VOLPAR version was upgraded with turbo prop engines and air conditioning.

**"DI DI MAU" - VIETNAMESE & GI SLANG TERM** - slang term picked up by GIs, meaning to do something fast.

**"FEET DRY OR FEET WET"** - When an aircraft crosses the shoreline from the ocean, he is said to be "Feet Dry". If he is headed out to sea, he is said to be "Feet Wet".

**"THE FENCE" - GI SLANG TERM** - For the borders between various nations in Southeast Asia. There was no actual fence.

**F-4 PHANTOM FIGHTER AIRCRAFT** - Probably the single most iconic weapon of America's Vietnam and cold war era. A capable air to air fighter, reconnaissance aircraft, SAM missile hunter-killer, and interceptor. It was also a tactical bomber, and could carry a larger bomb load than a World War Two B-17 bomber. It was flown by the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, and most of America's prominent cold war allies. Several air forces still fly them.

**AMERICA'S FIGHTING WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM (RETREAT)** - Nixon begin this retreat under the

name of "**Vietnamization**". A fighting retreat is probably the most difficult of military maneuvers to execute successfully. It started in 1969 from an America military presence in South Vietnam of 560,000 soldiers, deployed over a 400 mile front. By spring of 1972, there were only 60,000 American soldiers left. This was a successful fighting retreat of our troops.

**FOUR AMERICAN HERO GENERALS OF THE VIETNAM WAR - LIEUTENANT GENERAL VICTOR "BRUTE" KRULAK USMC; GENERAL FREDRICK WEYAND, US ARMY; GENERAL JOHN LAVELLE, USAF; BRIGADIER GENERAL DENNIS L SULLIVAN USAF -**

Since World War Two America's Generals have not had particularly impressive records. With the finest troops and the largest budgets in the world. American General officers can always get the fight started. But despite most of the Generals having advanced degrees in management and strategy from top universities and the best troops and technology. The bottom line is, the American Generals and Admirals can't quite "bring home the bacon".

Decisive victories have been hard to come by, (RE: Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan for examples). On 9-11-2003, despite trillions of dollars spent on America's national defense and intelligence. Nineteen uneducated, young Arab males armed only with box cutters, were able to successfully attack the epicenters of American financial and military power, and killed more

American citizens than died at Pearl Harbor. No one was ever held accountable for allowing this national debacle and tragedy. As a matter of fact, careers flourished after the attack. Go figure.

But four American General officers in Vietnam were noticeable exceptions to this mediocre record. They did this by displaying moral courage, intellectual integrity, military acumen, and acting in the best interest of the Republic ahead of their own personal interests. The American Republic, they as all young Second Lieutenants do, had taken an oath to protect and defend against all enemies both foreign and domestic.

First, Asian war specialist, Marine General "Brute" (He stood 5'4") Krulak went to the White House in 1967. He told LBJ, "If you keep fighting the war in this same way, America will lose, and you Mister President won't be reelected." Johnson threw Krulak out of the Oval Office, and made sure he would never be made Commandant of the Marines. Krulak died a man of honor and integrity. Johnson is still widely reviled. Twenty eight years later Krulak's son became the Commandant.

A second heroic American General was Fredrick Weyand of the U.S. Army. He served directly under the impervious to advice, hubristic, and petty American supreme commander in Vietnam, General Westmoreland. Just before the communist Tet offensive in February of 1968, Westmoreland wanted to redeploy the American Army forces protecting Saigon far away out on the Cambodian frontier. Weyand an intelligence officer

considered this to be a major mistake and objected. He was putting his career on the line. For Westmoreland could be vindictive toward any who challenged his decisions.

General Weyand finally prevailed and the troops were kept in the Saigon area. Weyand's strength and courage in standing up to the strategy challenged Westmoreland, saved Saigon from being overrun by the communist during the Tet offensive.

The third hero General of the Vietnam war was General John Lavelle of the U.S. Air Force. General Lavelle was commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force based in South Vietnam. He had been told quietly off the record by the Nixon White House, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to liberally interpret the convoluted Rules of Engagement imposed on American pilots by LBJ in 1968. Lavelle let his pilots proactively defend themselves from the advanced Soviet manned anti-aircraft missile systems for the first time during the war. This occurred just as the North Vietnamese were launching their massive invasion of South Vietnam during Easter week of 1972. The American corporate media and their Democrat allies in the congress went after Lavelle as a way of attacking Nixon. They called for Lavelle's court martial. He was relieved of his command of the 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force, reduced in rank, and forced to retire. A good soldier to the end, he only said, "He was proud to be the one, who was finally able to give American pilots the ability to defend themselves."

The fourth hero General was United States Air Force Brigadier General Dennis B. Sullivan. Sullivan was the tactical commander of all Thailand based B-52 bombers used in the 1972 Christmas week bombing of the North Vietnamese Capital Hanoi. After three nights of disastrous losses suffered by American B-52 bombers over Hanoi. This was due to the almost suicidal World War Two type tactics, commanded by American Air Force Generals setting in chairs safely back in the United States.

Due to the dire losses of American planes and crews, General Sullivan committed the cardinal military sin of violating his chain of command, and went directly to the Commander of the Strategic Air Command with suggested changes to the American bombers tactics. Sullivan's suggestions were adopted and immediately, American bomber losses dropped to almost zero, multiple American pilots and air crew were saved. And the bombing raids accomplished their mission of helping to induce the North Vietnamese to restart peace negotiations.

The Air Force hierarchy never forgave General Sullivan for saving the day with his chain of command violation. His career was terminated and he retired.

**"FUBAR"- FUCKED UP BEYOND ALL RECOGNITION**  
**- GI SLANG TERM** - A term originating in World War Two which referred to military or government operations so completely chaotic. They were no longer recognizable. The Vietnam war saw its fair share

**"THE GREEN WINNIE" - GI SLANG TERM** - You have in one way or the other been screwed by the military system, and there is absolutely nothing you can do about it, i.e. "We've got our orders, you might as well get out the Vaseline, and prepare to receive the Green Winnie."

**GOLD STANDARD WITHDRAWAL BY NIXON - AUGUST 15, 1971** - President Nixon ends the Gold Standard and decouples the U.S. dollar's value from being tied to the price and supply of gold bullion. This is one of the most significant monetary events in history. It was partially in response to the huge U.S. government deficits and surging inflation due to LBJ's spending on the Vietnam war, and social programs with no tax increases to pay for it. In effect on the Gold Standard, the U.S. could no longer continue to finance the war. When Nixon made his sudden change, gold bullion immediately doubled in price from \$35.00 per ounce to \$70.00 per ounce. It recently approached \$2,000.00 per ounce. Nixon's action led to the current U.S. government's ability to create trillions of dollars out of thin air. And to the slow decades long decline of the American middle class.

**GOLD BULLION IN THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE STATE BANK** - South Vietnam had to be created from nothing, when the French departed in 1954. They left the South Vietnamese absolutely nothing to start up the South Vietnamese government with. Not even a lone typewriter. There was no functioning currency. In order to get a working



internationally accepted currency. The United States periodically gave the South Vietnamese gold bullion from the American treasury. By 1972, the amount came to 16 tons of gold ingots.

**"HEY, DIDDLE DIDDLE, RIGHT UP THE MIDDLE"-  
GI SLANG TERM** - Meaning to storm straight ahead into the enemy guns. Usually attributed to the USMC's strategy for storming and getting clear of a lethal beachhead landing zone as fast as possible.

**HILL TRIBES - HUMONG ("MEO"), MONTAGNARD ("YARDS"), AND BRAO - ALL WERE PRIMITIVE AND ETHNICALLY DIFFERENT HIGHLAND TRIBES OF VIETNAM AND LAOS** - They were recruited by the CIA and Green Berets to fight as mercenaries on America's side during the Vietnam war. When America withdrew and the war was lost. These abandoned tribes were treated quite harshly by the communists.

**HO CHI MINH TRAIL - "THE BLOOD ROAD"** - The system of trails and roads running for about 400 miles from North Vietnam through Laos and Cambodia just across the border from South Vietnam. It brought the necessary men and supplies to fight the Americans. The Americans bombed this narrow 5 to 10 miles wide and 350 mile long trail system with greater intensity than they did to all of Germany and Japan in World War Two. Like ants the North Vietnamese just kept coming in greater numbers down the trail. By 1972 they even had a petroleum pipe

line down the length of the trail, and into South Vietnam. The Ho Chi Minh trail was the key to the communist victory in South Vietnam. It represented the greatest defeat ever for American airpower. The trail was made possible by a treaty neutralizing Laos. This treaty was engineered by Kennedy's diplomat, Averell Harriman of the State Department in 1962, and was probably the single greatest blunder by American leaders of the entire war.

**"IN HOT"**- When a military pilot makes a final turn toward his target, with his Master Arming Switch on, and selected weapons switches also engaged, he announces over his radio. "lead is in hot". He intends to blow something up on this pass.

**JET ASSITED TAKE-OFF - JATO** - Powerful solid fuel rockets strapped to an aircraft to enable it to take-off in a very short distance. A C-130 can have four JATO rockets strapped to each side toward the rear of the aircraft. It is quite a ride for about twenty seconds. Then you better be getting the nose down in a hurry.

**PRESIDENT LYNDON B JOHNSON - LBJ** - Johnson became President after the murder of JFK in 1963. He also took over the already expanding war in Vietnam. In 1964 while laying the groundwork for a huge expansion of the war. Johnson ran for election to the presidency in his own right, as the "Peace Candidate". A control freak, and possible psychopath, Johnson from 10,000 miles away, would personally choose what

individual targets American pilots could or could not bomb.

Opposed by his own Democrats, the Vietnam war broke him as a politician and a man. In 1968 with polls showing he faced almost certain defeat for reelection, he decided not to run. He too became another casualty of his own war.

**PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY - JFK** - The young American President was caught up in and carried by international and political events from the first of his presidency.

When he came into power there were 3,000 American troops in South Vietnam. When he died, there were 16,000. The war had started to take on a life of its own, no matter what doubts Kennedy had about the wisdom of fighting in Vietnam.

Probably the two most critical leadership blunders of the entire war, occurred during and were sanctioned by his administration.

First was the neutralization of Laos. This diplomatic agreement by JFK's diplomat Averill Harriman made the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and protected sanctuaries for the North Vietnamese Army possible. It was the keystone to America's defeat.

The second critical blunder was JFK's administration's complicity in allowing the President of South Vietnam to be deposed and murdered by incompetent South Vietnamese Generals. In effect America took ownership of the war, and there were then three critical years of political instability in South Vietnam.

The coup also cost America the moral high ground in conducting the war.

**KHMER ROUGE - THE MILITARY ARM OF THE CAMBODIAN COMMUNIST PARTY** - It was mostly manned by very young men in their early twenties and teens. They were led by very brutal older men and executed over a million of their fellow countrymen in the genocide. Their preferred execution tool was a hammer to the skull. It saved ammunition.

**KONG MY BASE - IN EXTREME SOUTHERN LAOS** - A CIA sponsored mountain top base surrounded by NVA controlled jungle territory on all sides. It was protected by what at the time was considered to be the world's largest mine field. Mercenary Brao hills tribesmen ran recon patrols on the Ho Chi Minh trail, and into Cambodia from Kong My. It was 75 miles southeast of Pakse, Laos and 15 miles north of Cambodia, and 25 miles from South Vietnam. In 1971 Kong My was the target of a 3 hour long night time air attack. Nobody took credit. The communist had no aircraft.

**LAOTIAN SECRET WAR** - A low level side-show conflict in Laos next door to South and North Vietnam. Run off the books by the U.S. State Department, who used the CIA's paramilitary wing as their action arm. The CIA had less than a thousand CIA personnel involved. They used the Laotian mountain tribes and Thai mercenaries as the cannon fodder for this war. It was mainly about the Ho Chi Minh trail, facilitating the American bombing of North Vietnam, protecting

Thailand, and Laotian opium. As it turned out the only people the war was being kept secret from, was the American people.

**A "LIFER" - GI SLANG TERM** - During the war's final years a tension developed between the drafted, short term, non-career American military personnel. And the personnel, who were staying in the military for a long term career (they were referred to as "**lifers**"). The short term drafted American soldiers were increasingly disenchanted with the now unpopular Vietnam war, and their comrades, the career military people. The career ("lifer") soldiers were still duty bound, to doggedly prosecuting a now obviously unwinnable war. It set up a tension between the two groups, and a threat to the cohesion of the American military.

**LONG BINH JAIL - The "LBJ" OR "THE LBJ RANCH" - GI SLANG TERM** - The main American military stockade (jail) in South Vietnam. Located on the huge American logistics base named Long Binh, twenty miles northwest of Saigon. It was considered to be a very hard place. Some called it the "LBJ Ranch" in mocking reference to Lyndon Johnson's lush Texas ranch.

**LONG TANH NORTH - LTN** - The spy and special operations air field about 20 miles north of Saigon.

**LANDING ZONE or LZ** - A hot helicopter LZ is one under enemy fire. Five-thousand American

helicopters were lost in Vietnam. Most of them, as they slowly descended into hot LZs. It has been said, the LBJ family had substantial holdings in the Bell Helicopter Company.

**ROBERT MCNAMARA - SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR JFK AND LBJ** - He was the primary architect for the Vietnam War. He acted as the Secretary of Defense for both Kennedy and Johnson. A Stanford MBA, he thought war could be reduced to a mere exercise of number crunching. His leadership has been judged as an unmitigated disaster. Yet, when relieved as Secretary of Defense. The system punished him by making him the President of The World Bank. In modern America, no elite pays a price for failure. The people do.

**MACV - MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND VIETNAM** - Based adjacent to the Tan Son Nhut airport in Saigon. It was American military headquarters for the Vietnam war. This large complex was sometimes called the "Pentagon East", or the "Puzzle Palace". It couldn't win a war, but had its own golf course. While sometimes wearing his bath robe, General Westmorland conducted his failed Asian land war of attrition and body counts from the MACV headquarters.

**M-16 INFANTRY RIFLE AND CAR-15 CARBINE VERSION FOR SPECIAL FORCES**- A new combat infantry rifle tailored for jungle warfare issued to our troops in South Vietnam starting in 1965. The weapon had significant reliability problems with jamming at first. Many dead



American soldiers were found next to their disassembled M-16 rifles. Which they were desperately trying to repair in the middle of combat. A perfect example of how your own military can do a pretty good job of getting you killed. Fifty years later, a highly reliable, modern version of the M-16 is still the primary infantry rifle in the U.S. Armed Forces.

**MUSTANG OFFICER** - An officer who had prior service as an enlisted man. Generally considered to be good officers because of their maturity and enlisted experiences.

**NSC FORTY COMMITTEE - THE WHITE HOUSE**

**NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL** - The Nixon White House's in house interface committee for national security issues at the Pentagon and Intelligence agencies. The NSC has sometimes been used by various Presidents for off the books operations outside of normal channels. The forty committee was the core operational group within the NSC during Nixon's administration. As with most things in the "Black World", the term forty was meant to mislead, there was no large committee of forty individuals.

**THE OLD MAN IN NEW ORLEANS - Carlos**

**Marcello** was the American Mafia boss of New Orleans and the Upper Gulf Coast including Dallas, Texas. In 1961 JFK's Attorney General, Robert Kennedy had Marcello scooped up off the street in New Orleans. Then flown by US Marshals to an isolated

jungle landing strip in Guatemala and dumped in the Guatemalan jungle as a criminal deportee. Marcello eventually made his way back home, and he was a man with a mission.

**PRESIDENT RICHARD M NIXON - "TRICKY DICK" -**

Elected in 1968, reelected in one of the largest landslide presidential victories ever in 1972. He was deposed in a bloodless coup d'état in 1974. He conducted America's fighting withdrawal from Vietnam. He was a master of foreign policy, and in 1972. He opened relations with communist China for the first time since 1947. This started the divide between Russia and China. He concluded several strategic weapons limitations treaties, and decoupled the dollar from physical gold. Which made possible the massive expansion of the American corporate economy and federal government. A career politician, he was very secretive and paranoid. In 1974 this led to Nixon's downfall due to the unnecessary Watergate interference with his Presidential opponent's campaign in 1972.

**"NIXON GOES TO CHINA" - FEBRUARY 1972 -**

**PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON** - Goes to Peking and reestablishes relations with China for the first time since 1947. With this move Nixon started to split the two major communist countries China and Russia. This greatly disturbed the North Vietnamese leaders, because it downgraded their importance to China. It is said to have been the opening gambit. In America's successful

conclusion of the Cold War some 17 years later. It also turned out to be the start toward globalization of the world trade system.

**NUCLEAR REACTOR IN DALAT, SOUTH VIETNAM -**

The U.S. gave a TRIGA MARK II nuclear research reactor to South Vietnam in 1963 under a program called "Atoms for Peace". By 1972, it had generated enough used fuel rods for an improvised nuclear weapon.

**"NUMBER 1 - NUMBER 10" - VIETNAMESE SLANG**

**TERM** - Used to relate the value of someone or something. 1 was the best and 10 the worst. "You number 10 GI, if you wouldn't buy a bar girl's watered down whiskey for instance."

**NUNGS - A WAR LIKE, ETHNICALLY CHINESE, GROUP IN SOUTH VIETNAM -**

They moved south from North Vietnam to escape communism. They were some of the hardest and best fighters South Vietnam had. They also worked as mercenaries for the CIA and others. They were the backbone of the **PRU, Provincial Reconnaissance Units**, who were the enforcers and executioners of the CIA's brutally effective **Phoenix Program**, which eliminated the Viet Cong leadership cadres in the country side. After the war they suffered extensive persecution at the hands of the communists.

**NVA - NORTH VIETNAM'S ARMED FORCES -**

Sometimes referred to as **The People's Liberation Army**. Unlike the South Vietnamese communist

guerilla fighters, the **Viet Cong**, the **NVA** was more or less a conventional military, and quite effective. The American military had a grudging respect, for their North Vietnamese opponent's military abilities. The NVA was the most effective military opponent, America has faced since World War II.

**"OKI"- "THE ROCK"- OKINAWA, JAPAN -** The primary American fortress island in the Western Pacific. During Vietnam it was a main logistics hub for supporting American operations in Vietnam, and the Western Pacific. Up until America gave control back to the Japanese government in 1972, nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons were stored there.

**OPIUM AND THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN DRUG TRADE -** Opium consumption and the use of heroin refined from opium had been a staple of Asian life for several hundred years. It accelerated with the European Empires, because the European governments used the profits from the drug trades to help pay for operating their Asian empires. The French did this in Indochina, and the English in China proper. The French intelligence services and Corsican gangsters were particularly involved with the drug trades in Vietnam. By 1971 approximately 15 to 20 percent of American military personnel in South Vietnam were using heroin and similar drugs. Various U.S. government agencies and leaders chose to turn a blind eye toward some of our allies leadership's drug dealing activities,

despite its devastating impact on the American troops.

**OPSEC - OPERATIONAL SECURITY-** The various techniques, procedures, and protocols the military uses to maintain security against enemy organizations discovering military secrets.

**ORANGE, AGENT** - The main powerful chemical herbicide the United States used in a huge chemical warfare campaign in South Vietnam. It was sprayed by formations of American C-123 aircraft in rural South Vietnam. In a futile effort to deny the communist, jungle cover and food. I might add, it did little to convert a peasant to our side, when he saw his rice paddy destroyed after our planes had flown over it. Most American bases were soaked in Agent Orange. So, the jungle would not return. American troops were breathing it in the hot dusty dry season, and bathing in it during the wet, muddy monsoon season. The long term effects on the Vietnamese people, and on the American veterans has been horrendous. No one was ever held accountable.

**OSS - THE OSS IN WORLD WAR TWO WAS THE U.S. OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES - America's forerunner to the CIA.** It was active during World War Two. In the summer of 1945 an OSS five man team parachuted into the jungle of North Vietnam in order to rendezvous with Ho Chi Minh, and help supply and train his men to fight the Japanese. Ho Chi Minh had come down with a critical illness. The OSS medical operative nursed him back to good health. An OSS Captain

was the first American to die in Vietnam in 1946.

**"OUT FUCKING STANDING"- GI SLANG TERM** - A statement used by military personnel to signify an excellent quality. It could be used sarcastically to signify the exact opposite also.

**OV-10 BRONCO AIRCRAFT** - Introduced in 1968, it was a state of the art Forward Air Control aircraft used to guide fast moving jet bombers in on their targets. Developed by the Marines, it was flown by the Air Force and Navy also. It had twin turbo prop engines with rough field/STOL short take-off and landing capability. It could carry a full complement of machine guns, rockets, or bombs. In its cargo compartment four paratroopers, a 3,000 pound cargo, or two stretcher patients and an attendant could be transported. It had a pilot and an observer, and was a rugged design built to survive at low altitudes.

**PAKSE, LAOS** - The southern-most town of any size in the Laotian panhandle. It was a Mekong river town about 50 miles north of Cambodia. It served as the CIA's operations base for Southern Laos. It was also a major trans-shipment point for aircraft bring opium out of Northern Laos, and on to the rest of Southeast Asia.

**THE PENTAGON PAPERS** - A Pentagon study of the full dynamics of how the American Military-Industrial Complex step by step took America



into the Vietnam quagmire. Despite studies almost from the start indicating America could not win in Vietnam. Former U.S. government operative, Daniel Ellsberg divulged this secret classified study to the press, and was targeted by the Nixon administration for defamation as a result.

**"THE PHOENIX PROGRAM" - THE CIA RUN PROGRAM WHICH SYSTEMATICALLY TARGETED THE VIET CONG'S LEADERSHIP DOWN TO THE VILLAGE LEVEL**

- It was one of the few successes the U.S. government had during the Vietnam war. Arguably the CIA's Phoenix Program was the single most effective program of the entire war. The program has been attacked for its brutality. It captured 80,000 suspected Viet Cong and killed another approximately 20,000 of them. About 20% were probably innocent of being in the Viet Cong. By 1972 due to the CIA's efforts, and catastrophic casualties during the 1968 Tet offensive. The Viet Cong was a defeated force, and kept on life-support by North Vietnam.

**POL POT - THE LEADER OF THE CAMBODIAN COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE MAIN FORCE BEHIND THE CAMBODIAN GENOCIDE** - A school teacher educated in Paris by French intellectuals. He led the communist rebels who took over the country of Cambodia in 1975. The communists tried to take the country back to a purely agricultural society. They started by executing with hammers to the head, anyone who wore eye glasses. Then they killed any suspected of

having an education. Thru execution and famine, the communist leader Pol Pot was responsible for the death of almost two million of his fellow Cambodians in his search for a perfect socialist society.

**AMERICAN POWs AND MIAs - ( PRISONERS OF WAR AND MISSING IN ACTION )** - A point of debate and controversy in the closing days of the war. The U.S. government said all POWs had been accounted for and released. **The National League of POW-MIA Families** said this was not true, and the government was lying. The league maintained there were still 150 to 200 POWs held in Laos. I agree with the league. In the American special forces community of the time, this was an accepted fact also.

**PRINCE SIHANOUK OF CAMBODIA** - The last Royal ruler of Cambodia. He tried to ride the back of the tiger, by playing the great powers such as the United States and China against one another. He was eventually consumed by the politics of it all. He was popular with his people, but the Cambodian establishment wanted him gone. The communist Khmer Rouge seduced him into thinking they were harmless nationalists. He lent his name and prestige to them, and as a result, several of his children and two million of his loyal subjects died.

**PROJECT 112 and PROJECT MK-NAMOMI** - A classified and clandestine U.S. government project using U.S. personnel for testing and storing chemical and biological weapons,

sometime without telling the military personnel involved what was happening.

**RANGERS - U.S. ARMY** - In Vietnam rather than serving as one Ranger Unit. The Rangers were distributed in company size units to other large regular army units. The Rangers then conducted small unit 4 to 8 man, deep jungle reconnaissance missions for the regular army. They were the strategic and tactical eyes and ears of the U.S. Army. Their long range recon patrols deep into communist controlled jungle, were along with the "Tunnel Rats", probably the most grindingly dangerous and demanding jobs of the entire war.

**RTB** - Military shorthand meaning a pilot or a unit is ending its mission, and returning to his base of operations.

**"RODGER, ROG, ROGER THAT, - AVIATOR AND MILITARY TERMINOLOGY** - It means, I have heard your message and understand.

**"THE ROSE GARDEN" - ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE BASE, NAM PHONG, THAILAND** - A classified and locked down, isolated, and primitive base in Northeast Thailand's jungle. It was used to conduct multiple clandestine operations by multiple services. It was only 30 to 45 minutes flying time away from North and South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. It had a ten thousand foot runway, which could accommodate any aircraft in the world including the SR-71. Along with U.S.

Army Special Forces, the CIA, Thai army, U.S. Marine Aviation Detachment Delta was based there in 1972 and 1973. The brutally hot, locked downed base was primitive and austere, even by Marine Corps standards. The enlisted Marines started calling it "**The Rose Garden**". This was in mocking reference to a Marine recruiting slogan of the day, "We didn't promise you a Rose Garden".

### **RUSSIA - THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS, U.S.S.R. -**

America's primary rival for world power after world war two. It is now being forgotten, but America for over forty years after World War two, was in a world-wide struggle with the Soviet Union for control of the world. This struggle was called the "Cold War", and it drove most of America's strategic decision making during this era. Many of the bad Vietnam decisions made by American leadership, were driven by considerations of the greater and vastly more strategically important, Cold War. Vietnam was a proxy - war between American capitalism and Soviet socialist-communism. Russia supported the North Vietnamese with massive military aid, and some technical help. ( Much as we are doing in the Ukraine today.) They did not send actual combat units to fight directly. That would have possibly caused a broader confrontation with America, and the possibility of a nuclear exchange. Winning or losing the Vietnam war was not critical for American survival. Winning the Cold War with Russia's Soviet Union was America's key to strategic survival and dominance.

**SAIGON – THE CAPITAL CITY OF SOUTH VIETNAM**

– Central Saigon was laid out and planned by the French colonialist as a European city with many wide tree lined boulevards, parks, and government buildings with European baroque architecture. It was often called the "Paris of the Orient". The heart of the social and political power structure of South Vietnam was in a 12 square block area in downtown Saigon adjacent to the Saigon river. This roughly one square mile contained, the Presidential Palace, City Hall, the Catholic Cathedral, The main Post Office, all the government ministries, the Central State Bank, the main rail road terminal, shipping docks, the Continental Palace, Caravelle, and Majestic hotels, a magnificent opera house, the Circle Sportief social club, and the French, English, and American Embassies. Thru it ran decadent and sensuous Tu Do street.

The French designed Saigon for a population of 400,000. By 1972 due to war refugees fleeing from the violence in the country side, the population had exploded to more than 2 million. Most were living in abject poverty in refugee slums. The "Paris of the Orient" had become somewhat war torn, shabby, crime ridden, and polluted with an overwhelmed infrastructure. There was a fatalistic attitude in the air, along with the smells of hydro-carbon fuels and raw sewage, in addition there were the stench of intrigue, corruption, drugs, and violence. Due to the American Army and its money leaving, the economy was near collapse.

## **SEARCH AND DESTROY TACTICS - ATTRITION**

**WARFARE** - The mindless tactic implemented by General Westmoreland in 1966, which tried to win the Vietnam war by allowing the massive killing machine of the American military to rampage all over South Vietnam burning villages, dropping napalm, and defoliating the rice fields and forests with the occasional war crime thrown in. American troops would move in seize an area, and then abandon it. And the communist would just move back in. Over time this became very demoralizing for American troops. Who questioned why they were dying to take a hill, and then just walk away from it. Also, it was not exactly a way to win the hearts and minds of the heavily rural population of South Vietnam. Due to skillful communist world wide propaganda efforts. Over time, the United States military came to be seen as the "bad guy" due to their using search and destroy tactics. Which was the best idea LBJ, McNamara, and Westmoreland could come up with.

## **SEVEN REASONS AMERICA LOST THE VIETNAM WAR**

1. In 1962 JFK's American State Department diplomats helped declare Laos a neutral country, this made the Ho Chi Minh trail and protected communist military sanctuaries possible. This diplomatic act led by Avril Harriman was the keystone for America's defeat.
2. In October of 1963 the JFK administration was complicit in the overthrow and murder of South Vietnam's President Ngo Dinh Diem,



installing even more corrupt and incompetent Generals. This led to three critical years of leadership and political chaos. What until then, had been a small civil war, now exploded into a major war. Which, because of Diem's assassination, America had taken ownership of. Whether, we wanted it or not. In addition, we lost the moral high ground in conducting the war.

3. In 1964 LBJ and his aides decided on a conventional strategy of attrition warfare in Vietnam. In a war on the Asian mainland, we would simply try to kill more Asians, than the North Vietnamese could tolerate. The main metric of success, would be the "Body Count" numbers. This point was never reached. LBJ was running for election as a "Peace" candidate at the time of this decision.
4. In 1965 LBJ's team made the decision to treat Vietnam first and foremost as a military problem. Addressing the political, economic, social, and corruption issues were either put-off or downgraded. As a result the South Vietnamese Government never achieved widespread credibility with its people.
5. In 1965 LBJ's team made the decision to essentially sideline the South Vietnamese Army (the ARVN), and delay turning it into a viable military machine. They would use the American military to win the war. It didn't, and time to build a sustainable ARVN military eventually ran out.

6. Main stream American media's incompetence in grasping and reporting the war's dynamics, and its tacit complicity with communist world-wide propaganda in systematically undermining the American people's support for the war.
7. Time - Despite ample historic proof of the American people having a 3 to 4 year patience for winning major wars. Hubristic LBJ, his staff, and Generals assumed, they had unlimited time and bodies to win with in Vietnam. By mid 1968, after the shock of the TET offensive, the American people called it quits. Their support for the war and Johnson's leadership collapsed. In effect time had run out.

#### **SEVENTH STRATEGIC TECHNICAL DIRECTORATE -**

South Vietnam's special operations group for reconnaissance, cross border operations, counter intelligence, assassinations, enhanced interrogations, and all forms of direct action. There was also involvement in the drug world and black market operations.

#### **"SIERRA HOTEL" - "SHIT-HOT" - GI SLANG**

**TERM** - Military aviator term signifying something meets with total approval.

**"SHEEP DIPPED" or "POCKET LEAVE"** - The process the American military uses to make military personnel on clandestine duty, disappear from military rolls, and appear to have no further connection to their arm of the military or the U.S. government. A "legend" (new

life history) is constructed about this person to further obscure his former connection to the U.S. government. If things go badly, the clandestine person can be plausibly denied, as to having any connections to the American government. In my opinion there is a good chance, Lee Harvey Oswald was such a person.

**"SNAKE AND NAPE" - GI SLANG TERM** - It refers to a type of bomb ordinance load carried by American tactical bombers in Southeast Asia. The "Snake" referred to MK-81 250 pound high-drag high explosive "Snake Eye" bombs. The "Nape" referred to GBU-47 500 pound napalm canisters. This load was typically intended for high speed on the deck, low altitude delivery in direct support of ground troops. The combination was highly effective against enemy troop formations in jungles.

**"SNAKE EATERS" - U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES, THE "GREEN BERETS" - GI SLANG TERM** - It refers to the U.S. Army Special Forces, and their ability to live off the land, and blend with a native population. From time to time, they probably did have a snake or two for dinner. It was a term of respect from other military men. They were highly effective unconventional warriors, and quite often involved with the CIA and intelligence operations. They were generally resented by the regular "Big" army Generals, as out of control cowboys, too much under the influence of the CIA at a cost to the regular Army's reputation.

**"SKY PEOPLE"** – The indigenous highland tribes of Laos, the Hmong, and Brao were isolated in the misty and jungle covered mountains of Laos. They referred to all Americans as the "Sky People". They had only ever seen the American CIA personnel, who recruited and supplied them, arrive in an airplane or in a helicopter. They thought at first, if Americans always came from the sky. Then they assumed, America was some mystical land up in the sky. They referred to Americans as the **"Sky People"**.

### **SOUTH KOREA – A CRITICAL AMERICAN ALLY**

**DURING THE VIETNAM WAR** – The fiercest of all American allies during the war. They had 50,000 soldiers and marines in country at their high point. Over 300,000 served in Vietnam.

Early on the Viet Cong surrounded a South Korean outpost and managed to storm through an open gate. The heavily outnumbered South Koreans then retook the gate and locked the communists inside with the South Koreans. The South Koreans then engaged the trapped Viet Cong unit in hand to hand combat. When it was over the communists were wiped out. There were 245 dead communists and 15 dead South Koreans. The Viet Cong leadership sent out orders to avoid fighting the South Koreans if at all possible. The South Koreans have been accused of war crimes in South Vietnam. They replied they were fighting a brutal insurgency, and there will always be gray areas in the conduct of such a war.

**SPOOKS - GI SLANG TERM** - A generic term for officers of intelligence organizations including the CIA, but not limited to it.

**SUBIC BAY & OLANGOPO CITY - PHILLIPINE**

**ISLANDS** - The largest U.S. Navy base west of Pearl Harbor. It was the major naval supply and refitting point for support of the war in Vietnam. During this time, the attached town of Olongapo City was possibly the largest center of prostitution on the planet. It was like the "Old West" on steroids. If an American Seventh Fleet sailor or marine went off-base. For five dollars, he could hire a body guard with a pump shotgun to follow him around for the evening.

**"THE SUCK - EMBRACE THE SUCK" - A GI SLANG**

**TERM** - The situation or organization is oppressively bad, but there is nothing to be done about it. So just take hold and make the best of it you can. I first heard the term used by young enlisted Marines.

**THE COMMUNIST'S TET OFFENSIVE IN 1968** - A surprise Viet Cong communist offensive throughout South Vietnam. The communist during the temporary truce for the Lunar New-Year celebration called "TET", surprise attacked over 100 locations throughout South Vietnam. Including Saigon itself, and the old imperial capital of Hue. The Viet Cong lost around 40,000 KIA, and were never able to field large units during the rest of the war. Tet was a devastating military defeat for the communists

in South Vietnam. The South Vietnamese military performed well, and did not collapse as the communist thought they would. The South Vietnamese people stayed loyal to the government, and did not go over to the communist side.

But the Tet Offensive proved over time, to have been an even more devastating psychological defeat for the American people and their leaders. Much of this was aided by the American news media withdrawing support for the war, and not correctly reporting the context of what was happening.

All of this was aided and abetted by a major communist world wide propaganda campaign. Before "Tet", LBJ and General Westmoreland made broad statements to the fact, "The war was almost won", "They could see light at the end of the tunnel". Then the communist attacked country-wide during " Tet ". The American public's support for the war, and confidence in their leaders, started to collapse and never recovered. A classic case of the communists losing the battle, but winning the war by using the American media to manipulate American mass psychology. To this day American leadership has never recovered the full trust, they enjoyed before the Vietnam war.

**THAILAND - A CRITICAL AMERICAN ALLY DURING THE VIETNAM WAR** - The Thais realized they would be next on the communist's target list in Southeast Asia. So, they supported America's efforts. They would rather fight the communists on the far side of the Mekong River, rather than



in Thailand proper. The Thais provided 7 major military airbases and facilities for the American military. They supplied approximately 60,000 mercenary troops to fight in Laos, and sent regular Thai military troops to help in South Vietnam. Using low tech T-28 prop planes, they flew many clandestine bombing missions in Laos and Cambodia.

**T-28 TROJAN AIRCRAFT** - A 1950s era American military propeller driven trainer, converted into a very low tech dive bomber the low tech Thai, Laotian and Cambodian air forces could use and maintain. American fixed wing pilots would fly possibly two missions a day. The Laotian and Humong pilots might fly up to ten missions in a day in their antique T-28s. They would essentially fly and fight until they died. Very brave men.

**"THERE IT IS" - A GI SLANG TERM** - A phrase used by American personnel in Vietnam. A statement signifying a fatalistic view some event was predestined by a higher power, and there was nothing to be done about it. Just deal with it.

**TRADE CRAFT** - procedures and techniques used by intelligence officers in their covert and clandestine activities.

**TRADER JON'S** - Florida dive bar and strip joint in the 60's and 70's during the Vietnam war era. It was a rite of passage for many

student Naval Aviators to make the acquaintance of Trader's ladies during their training.

The last time this author sighted Trader. He was about a thousand feet below me in the traffic pattern at Naval Air Station Pensacola during an airshow. Trader then in his 60s, was wearing goggles, baggy Bermuda shorts, and a Hawaii shirt, with his arms stretched wide, while standing on the top wing of an ancient bi-plane as it did a low pass by the tower. He was that kind of a guy.

**"VIETNAMIZATION" AND AMERICA'S RETREAT FROM THE VIETNAM QUAGMIRE** - When Nixon took office in January of 1969. He immediately begin the process of a tactical withdrawal of America's military from South Vietnam. To put lipstick on what was simply a retreat, he called this process **"Vietnamization"**. As we withdrew, more and more of the fighting was turned over to the South Vietnamese Army. The South Vietnamese were given a huge quantity of American weapons and supplies, and a half-hearted effort to train them on how to use these sophisticated weapons. Essentially, we tried to make them into a miniature copy of the American military. The South Vietnamese weren't up to the logistics, manpower, and financial demands of managing this by themselves. We gave them the wrong military machine for the wrong war. Then at a crucial time in the early 1970's the U.S. Congress cut off their supplies.

**VIET CONG, THE "VC"** - Sometimes shortened to VC, or **Charlie**. The indigenous to South Vietnam

communist rebels against the South Vietnamese government. Their political wing was called the **National Liberation Front**. They considered themselves to be politically separate from the North Vietnamese communists. The Viet Cong fought an unconventional guerilla type insurgency. The North Vietnamese Army fought in a more conventional style. Often, commentators just refer to all of the communists as the "Viet Cong". This is factually and historically inaccurate. The Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese were two separate entities politically and militarily. With the North Vietnamese being by far the more dominant force.

There was tension between the South Vietnamese Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Communists. The North Vietnamese considered the Viet Cong to be usefully expendable, and not up to being part of the communist leadership elite after the war. The Viet Cong suffered devastating losses of 40,000 deaths in the Tet Offensive of 1968. They were never able to launch another large unit offensive. After Tet, the CIA's Phoenix program systematically targeted and captured or eliminated the Viet Cong leadership in most of South Vietnam. By 1972 the Viet Cong had lost the guerilla war in South Vietnam. The North Vietnamese communist leadership were pleased, because this eliminated the South Vietnamese communists as potential political rivals for post war power. By 1972, with the American military almost gone. The North Vietnamese army could now invade and finish the war conventionally.

**GENERAL WESTMORELAND - COMMANDER OF AMERICA'S ARMY IN SOUTH VIETNAM -**

LBJ made General William Westmoreland the Commander of all U.S. forces in South Vietnam. Westmoreland decided to conduct a conventional war of attrition in Vietnam a rural peasant nation. History proved it to be the wrong strategy, for the wrong war, at the wrong time. In addition, it was morally bankrupt.

In late 1968, Westmoreland was recalled to the United States after his failure to successfully conduct the war. After failing in Vietnam, he was made Chief of Staff of the entire U.S. Army. In modern America, elites are never asked to pay for their failures. On some days in his headquarters, he conducted the war wearing a house robe, so he wouldn't crease a nicely starched uniform.

**"THE WING" - USMC AVIATION FORCES -** Fixed wing and helicopters, they make up about a quarter of the Marine Corps, and are the eighth largest air force in the world.

**"THE WORLD" - GI SLANG TERM -** American military personnel in Southeast Asia referred to the United States mainland, and their former lives there as back in "the world".

